

SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER INFORMATION

Introduction:

- A Special Needs Shelter operated by the Bay County Health Department is available for those who qualify during emergencies such as hurricanes..
- A Special Needs Shelter is a temporary emergency facility designed for providing care to residents whose medical condition is such that it exceeds the capabilities of the Red Cross Shelter but is not severe enough to require hospitalization.
- The Bay County Special Needs Shelter should be considered a last option for persons with special health care needs. Spaces within the shelter are limited and the conditions will be uncomfortable.
- The Special Needs shelter is a lifeboat not a cruise ship.
- Special Needs persons should remain in their own home if it is well constructed and not in a storm surge/flood zone and have family members, friends, or Home Health Care Agencies who can assist them during a community emergency.

Special Needs Shelter Information:

- The Bozeman Learning Center is the only approved Special Needs Shelter in Bay County and is located at 13410 Hwy 77, Panama City, FL 32409 ([Map link](#))
- Medical personnel, primarily nurses, are provided by the Bay County Health Department.
- Each Special Needs Shelter resident should be accompanied at the shelter with a caregiver or family member to provide the care needed.
- Caregiver should bring needed supplies for themselves
- As soon as the storm passes and the roads are safe for travel, Special Needs Shelter occupants should be prepared to vacate the shelter.
- Valuables or large amounts of money should not be brought to the shelter unless caregiver or family member can provide oversight.

Registration:

- The Bay County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) maintains the special needs population registry. All persons desiring sheltering in the SpNS must submit the Special Needs Registration Form (available from the OEM and most home health agencies) to the OEM.

Eligibility Criteria include those:

- Who are ambulatory, with or without assisting devices
- Who require assistance with ADL or mobility
- Who have sensory impairment that leads to endangerment of oneself or others in an unfamiliar environment

- Who are dependent on Oxygen (with stable respiratory function and other conditions)
- Who have dementia/confusion who need a supervised environment
- Who require assistance with dressing changes, tube feedings, foley catheters, and other care for home-based persons (if supplies or provided)
- Persons with a combination of conditions that do not in themselves indicate Special Needs Shelter eligibility but may still be eligible. The triage nurse at the shelter will make that determination.

Supply List: (not all inclusive)

- Identification with photo and current address
- Important papers such as insurance, doctor orders, prescriptions, etc.
- Required medications and medical support equipment such as wheelchairs
- Special dietary food needs and/or snacks
- Pillows (beds and sheets will be provided)
- Personal items (toothbrush/paste, deodorant, soap, towel & washcloth, medications, etc.)
- Change of clothes (2 or 3 complete sets)
- Two pair of comfortable shoes (not high heels)
- Flashlight with working batteries
- Antibacterial wipes
- Sweater or light jacket (it can get cold in the shelter)
- Books, games, cards, and other similar items for entertainment

Contacts: For more information, contact Don Rich at the Bay County Health Department at (850) 872-4455 Ext. 1292.